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# U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE BOSTON, MA.

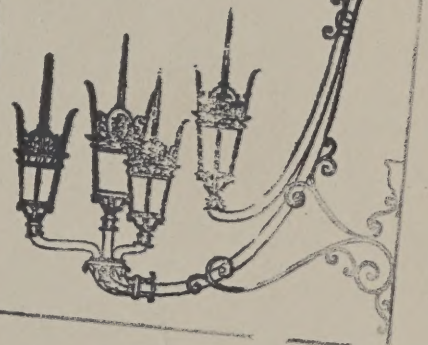
## RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF SURPLUS DETERMINATION

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City of Boston Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor  
APRIL 1. 1986


ATTACHMENT 1





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*1. Response to notice of determination*





## RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF SURPLUS DETERMINATION

U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

### I. SUMMARY

On March 13, 1986, Mayor Raymond L. Flynn received notice from Barbara M. Leonard, Regional Administrator for the General Services Administration, notifying the City of Boston that the U.S. Custom House, Boston, Massachusetts, is surplus to Government property needs and is available for disposal. In accordance with this notice, the City of Boston hereby requests that the GSA transfer title to the U.S. Custom House to the City of Boston acting by and through the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

The City of Boston's purpose in acquiring the Custom House is to ensure the appropriate use and maintenance in perpetuity of one of Boston's most significant landmarks. After the Boston Landmarks Commission declares the building a Boston landmark and the Boston Redevelopment Authority completes an open redevelopment competition, the property shall be leased to a developer willing to restore and maintain the building according to established historic, public safety, and urban design criteria.

The City of Boston has long recognized the significance of the Custom House, and has worked to preserve this building's historic place in Boston through establishment of the Waterfront Urban Renewal Area and the Custom House Historic District, and by requiring developers of buildings in this area to reduce heights and introduce setbacks which afford views of the Custom House tower from points throughout downtown. Ownership of the Custom House will strengthen the City's ability to maintain the historic character of this area, to encourage the renovation and maintenance of a landmark quality structure, and to continue the tradition of public access to the rotunda and observation deck.





## II. AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE THE CUSTOM HOUSE

The notice of surplus determination stated that disposal to public agencies will be allowed as provided in 40 U.S.C. 484 (e)(3)(H), "negotiated sales to public bodies for public purposes generally."

The Boston Redevelopment Authority is a legally authorized and appropriate recipient of this property. M.G.L. 121B s.11(d) and s.45 establish acquisition by the Authority of properties for disposition and rehabilitation as a valid public purpose for which public funds may be spent. The Authority has already invested over \$50,000,000 in public funding in its renewal and restoration work in this area, generating over \$1,000,000,000 of private investment in the same area. The Custom House is also located within the Authority's Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Project, approved by the city, state, and federal government and adopted June 8, 1964. M.G.L. Ch.121B and the Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan grant the Authority legal authority to assume the care, custody, and control of the U.S. Custom House to ensure its restoration within the historic context of the Waterfront Project.

As the City of Boston's renewal and planning agency, the Authority has city capital funds and unencumbered funds of its own to ensure the expeditious execution of necessary purchase and sales agreements and resulting conveyances.

The Authority has extensive experience in preserving historic properties through both sales and long-term leases, including numerous structures in the Charlestown Naval Shipyard and several properties near the Custom House such as the Central Wharf building and Faneuil Hall Marketplace.

The Authority has a staff of 200, including professional planners, architects, engineers, and lawyers to ensure the successful reuse of this historic structure. The Boston Landmark Commission, which will work with the Authority on this project, has 18 members and a professional staff with ten years of experience identifying, evaluating, designating, and regulating restoration of Boston's significant buildings and districts.





### III. PLANNED USE OF THE PROPERTY

The City of Boston plans through the Boston Redevelopment Authority to acquire and hold title to the Custom House, then lease the building to a developer chosen in an open competition. The selected developer will be required to restore and maintain the building in accordance with rehabilitation standards and criteria established by the Boston Landmarks Commission (see Section III) and such other allowable use, public safety, and urban design criteria as the Boston Redevelopment Authority establishes in its request for developer's proposals. At a minimum, the use, rehabilitation, safety, and design criteria shall include the following:

#### Allowable Uses

1. The original Custom House at the base of the tower shall be maintained as a public space with cultural or other non-commercial activities which are for the use of the general public.
2. The observation deck shall be made available for limited public access. ✓
3. The tower space may be put to use for office, residential, or hotel use. However, no portions of the buildings shall be sold for condominium ownership.
4. Complementary to the Custom House, public land in the immediate vicinity of the tower shall be improved to increase use of the area by pedestrians, rather than solely for parking. ✓

#### Historic Rehabilitation Standards

5. The building shall be rehabilitated to historic landmark standards including (1) the Secretary of Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings", (2) the Boston Landmarks Commission's General Standards and Criteria, and (3) specific standards and criteria for the Custom House to be established by the Boston Landmarks Commission.

#### Public Health and Safety Guidelines

6. Installation of a sprinkler system shall be required.
7. Facilities to improve handicapped access shall be required.





8. Other public health and safety measures may be specified after a survey of the building.

#### Urban Design Guidelines

9. The clock shall be repaired and maintained.
10. The building shall be appropriately illuminated.
11. Site area improvements shall be required. Specific guidelines will be developed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

These guidelines will be presented to developers and to appraisers evaluating the fair market value of this property subject to these reuse guidelines.

#### IV. REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The City of Boston and its agencies will move expeditiously to acquire the property from the General Services Administration, to designate the property as a Boston landmark, and to conduct an open redevelopment competition resulting in lease of the building for appropriate rehabilitation and reuse. The City is ready to coordinate any needed engineering reviews or other efforts with the GSA to ensure a timely acquisition.

The following are the major anticipated steps in this redevelopment process:

1. City transmits notice of intent to purchase to the General Services Administration.
2. GSA acknowledges receipt of City notice of intent and invites City to file a formal application for purchase.
3. City and GSA hire appraisers to evaluate fair market value of property under proposed development criteria.
4. Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) files formal application on behalf of City of Boston to the GSA for purchase of the Custom House.
5. After completion of appraisals, City and GSA negotiate and agree on the price and terms of acquisition.
6. Boston Landmarks Commission designates the Custom House building as a Boston landmark and establishes rehabilitation standards and criteria, effective upon transfer of title from GSA to the BRA.





7. BRA issues request for proposals to lease the building subject to detailed design and redevelopment guidelines. Advertisements are placed in major newspapers.
8. GSA transfers title of the Custom House to the BRA.
9. Proposals are submitted to the BRA and reviewed by an interdisciplinary team of architects, planners, finance specialists, and lawyers.
10. BRA grants tentative designation to a development team.
11. Lease commencement agreement is signed between the BRA and the tentative designee, setting forth development guidelines, lease terms, and project schedule.
12. Review of design of renovations and site improvements is conducted by the BRA and the Boston Landmarks Commission where applicable.
13. Boston Landmarks Commission votes on Certificate of Design Approval.
14. BRA grants final developer designation. Lease is signed.
15. Renovation commences.





*2. Historic Rehabilitation Standards*



U.S. Department  
of the Interior

National Park Service

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S

STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

and Guidelines for Rehabilitating  
Historic Buildings

Reprinted April, 1982  
Department of the State Secretary  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Michael Joseph Connolly, Chairman



MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION





"Rehabilitation means the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."

The following "Standards for Rehabilitation" shall be used by the Secretary of the Interior when determining if a rehabilitation project qualifies as "certified rehabilitation" pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976, the Revenue Act of 1978, and the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. These standards are a section of the Secretary's "Standards for Historic Preservation Projects" and appear in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 67 (formerly 36 CFR Part 1208).

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.





7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

#### GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following guidelines are designed to help individual property owners formulate plans for the rehabilitation, preservation, and continued use of historic buildings consistent with the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation." The guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, sizes, and materials. They apply to permanent and temporary construction on the exterior and interior of historic buildings as well as new attached or adjacent construction.

Techniques, treatments, and methods consistent with the Secretary's "Standards for Rehabilitation" are listed in the "recommended" column on the left. Not all recommendations listed under a treatment will apply to each project proposal. Rehabilitation approaches, materials, and methods which may adversely affect a building's architectural and historic qualities are listed in the "not recommended" column on the right. Every effort will be made to update and expand the guidelines as additional techniques and treatments become known.

Specific information on rehabilitation and preservation technology may be obtained by writing to the Technical Preservation Services Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer. Advice should also be sought from qualified professionals, including architects, architectural historians, and archaeologists skilled in the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of old buildings.



## THE ENVIRONMENT

Recommended

Retaining distinctive features such as the size, scale, mass, color, and materials of buildings, including roofs, porches, and stairways that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character.

Retaining landscape features such as parks, gardens, street lights, signs, benches, walkways, streets, alleys and building setbacks that have traditionally linked buildings to their environment.

Using new plant materials, fencing, walkways, street lights, signs, and benches that are compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color.

Not Recommended

Introducing new construction into neighborhoods that is incompatible with the character of the district because of size, scale, color, and materials.

Destroying the relationship of buildings and their environment by widening existing streets, changing paving material, or by introducing inappropriately located new streets and parking lots that are incompatible with the character of the neighborhood.

Introducing signs, street lighting, benches, new plant materials, fencing, walkways and paving materials that are out of scale or are inappropriate to the neighborhood.

## BUILDING SITE

Recommended

Identifying plants, trees, fencing, walkways, outbuildings, and other elements that might be an important part of the property's history and development.

Retaining plants, trees, fencing, walkways, street lights, signs, and benches that reflect the property's history and development.

Basing decisions for new site work on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, and tax records. If changes are made they should be carefully evaluated in light of the past appearance of the site.

Not Recommended

Making changes to the appearance of the site by removing old plants, trees, fencing, walkways, outbuildings, and other elements before evaluating their importance in the property's history and development.

Leaving plant materials and trees in close proximity to the building that may be causing deterioration of the historic fabric.





## BUILDING SITE—continued

Recommended

Providing proper site and roof drainage to assure that water does not splash against building or foundation walls, nor drain toward the building.

Not RecommendedArcheological featuresRecommended

Leaving known archeological resources intact.

Minimizing disturbance of terrain around the structure, thus reducing the possibility of destroying unknown archeological resources.

Arranging for an archeological survey of all terrain that must be disturbed during the rehabilitation program. The survey should be conducted by a professional archeologist.

Not Recommended

Installing underground utilities, pavements, and other modern features that disturb archeological resources.

Introducing heavy machinery or equipment into areas where their presence may disturb archeological resources.

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BUILDING: STRUCTURAL SYSTEMSRecommended

Recognizing the special problems inherent in the structural systems of historic buildings, especially where there are visible signs of cracking, deflection, or failure.

Undertaking stabilization and repair of weakened structural members and systems.

Replacing historically important structural members only when necessary. Supplementing existing structural systems when damaged or inadequate.

Not Recommended

Disturbing existing foundations with new excavations that undermine the structural stability of the building.

Leaving known structural problems untreated that will cause continuing deterioration and will shorten the life of the structure.

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## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES--continued

Masonry: Adobe, brick, stone, terra cotta, concrete, stucco and mortar

Recommended \*

Retaining original masonry and mortar, whenever possible, without the application of any surface treatment.

Repointing only those mortar joints where there is evidence of moisture problems or when sufficient mortar is missing to allow water to stand in the mortar joint.

Duplicating old mortar in composition, color, and texture.

Duplicating old mortar in joint size, method of application, and joint profile.

Repairing stucco with a stucco mixture that duplicates the original as closely as possible in appearance and texture.

Cleaning masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti and stains and always with the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes.

Not Recommended

Applying waterproof or water repellent coatings or surface consolidation treatments unless required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified. Coatings are frequently unnecessary, expensive, and can accelerate deterioration of the masonry.

Repointing mortar joints that do not need repointing. Using electric saws and hammers to remove mortar can seriously damage the adjacent brick.

Repointing with mortar of high Portland cement content can often create a bond that is stronger than the building material. This can cause deterioration as a result of the differing coefficient of expansion and the differing porosity of the material and the mortar.

Repointing with mortar joints of a differing size or joint profile, texture or color.

Sandblasting, including dry and wet grit and other abrasives, brick or stone surfaces; this method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Using chemical cleaning products that would have an adverse chemical reaction with the masonry materials, i.e., acid on limestone or marble.

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\* For more information consult Preservation Briefs: 1: "The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings" and Preservation Briefs: 2: "Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings" (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, 1975 and 1976). Both are available from the Government Printing Office or State Historic Preservation Officers.



## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Masonry: Adobe, brick, stone, terra cotta, concrete, stucco and mortar

Recommended

Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.

Replacing missing significant architectural features, such as cornices, brackets, railings, and shutters.

Retaining the original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces, including early signage wherever possible. Brick or stone surfaces may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons.

Not Recommended

Applying new material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as artificial brick siding, artificial cast stone or brick veneer.

Removing architectural features such as cornices, brackets, railings, shutters, window architraves, and doorway pediments.

Removing paint from masonry surfaces indiscriminately. This may subject the building to damage and change its appearance.

Wood: Clapboard, weatherboard, shingles and other wooden siding

Recommended

Retaining and preserving significant architectural features, wherever possible.

Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material that duplicates in size, shape, and texture the old as closely as possible.

Not Recommended

Removing architectural features such as siding, cornices, brackets, window architraves, and doorway pediments. These are, in most cases, an essential part of a building's character and appearance that illustrate the continuity of growth and change.

Resurfacing frame buildings with new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, and plastic or aluminum siding. Such material can also contribute to the deterioration of the structure from moisture and insects.

Architectural Metals: Cast iron, steel, pressed tin, aluminum and zinc

Recommended

Retaining original material, whenever possible.

Not Recommended

Removing architectural features that are an essential part of a building's character and appearance, illustrating the continuity of growth and change.





## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Architectural Metals: Cast iron, steel, pressed tin, aluminum and zincRecommended

Cleaning when necessary with the appropriate method. Metals should be cleaned by methods that do not abrade the surface.

Not Recommended

Exposing metals which were intended to be protected from the environment. Do not use cleaning methods which alter the color, texture, and tone of the metal.

Roofs and RoofingRecommended

Preserving the original roof shape.

Retaining the original roofing material, whenever possible.

Providing adequate roof drainage and insuring that the roofing materials provide a weathertight covering for the structure.

Replacing deteriorated roof coverings with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture.

Preserving or replacing where necessary, all architectural features that give the roof its essential character, such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting, and weather vanes.

Not Recommended

Changing the essential character of the roof by adding inappropriate features such as dormer windows, vents, or skylights.

Applying new roofing material that is inappropriate to the style and period of the building and neighborhood.

Replacing deteriorated roof coverings with new materials that differ to such an extent from the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture that the appearance of the building is altered.

Stripping the roof of architectural features important to its character.

Windows and DoorsRecommended \*

Retaining and repairing window and door openings, frames, sash, glass, doors, lintels, sills, pediments, architraves, hardware, awnings and shutters where they contribute to the architectural and historic character of the building.

Not Recommended

Introducing or changing the location or size of windows, doors, and other openings that alter the architectural and historic character of the building.



## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Windows and DoorsRecommended\*

Improving the thermal performance of existing windows and doors through adding or replacing weatherstripping and adding storm windows and doors which are compatible with the character of the building and which do not damage window or door frames.

Replacing missing or irreparable windows on significant facades with new windows that match the original in material, size, general muntin and mullion proportion and configuration, and reflective qualities of the glass.

Not Recommended

Replacing window and door features on significant facades with historically and architecturally incompatible materials such as anodized aluminum, mirrored or tinted glass.

Removing window and door features that can be repaired where such features contribute to the historic and architectural character of the building.

Changing the size or arrangement of window panes, muntins, and rails where they contribute to the architectural and historic character of the building.

Installing on significant facades shutters, screens, blinds, security grills, and awnings which are historically inappropriate and which detract from the character of the building.

Installing new exterior storm windows and doors which are inappropriate in size or color, which are inoperable, or which require removal of original windows and doors.

Installing interior storm windows that allow moisture to accumulate and damage the window.

Replacing sash which contribute to the character of a building with those that are incompatible in size, configuration, and reflective qualities or which alter the setback relationship between window and wall.

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\*For more information consult Preservation Briefs: 3: "Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings" (Washington, D.C. Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, 1978). It is available from the Government Printing Office or State Historic Preservation Officers.





## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Windows and DoorsRecommendedNot Recommended

Installing heating/air conditioning units in the window frames when the sash and frames may be damaged. Window installations should be considered only when all other viable heating/cooling systems would result in significant damage to historic materials.

StorefrontsRecommendedNot Recommended

Retaining and repairing existing storefronts including windows, sash, doors, transoms, signage, and decorative features where such features contribute to the architectural and historic character of the building.

Where original or early storefronts no longer exist or are too deteriorated to save, retaining the commercial character of the building through 1) contemporary design which is compatible with the scale, design, materials, color, and texture of the historic buildings; or 2) an accurate restoration of the storefront based on historical research and physical evidence.

Introducing a storefront or new design element on the ground floor, such as an arcade, which alters the architectural and historic character of the building and its relationship with the street or its setting or which causes destruction of significant historic fabric.

Using materials which detract from the historic or architectural character of the building, such as mirrored glass.

Altering the entrance through a significant storefront.

Entrances, porches, and stepsRecommendedNot Recommended

Retaining porches and steps that are appropriate to the building and its development. Porches or additions reflecting later architectural styles are often important to the building's historical integrity and, wherever possible, should be retained.

Removing or altering porches and steps that are appropriate to the building's development and style.



## BUILDING: EXTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Entrances, porches, and stepsRecommended

Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated architectural features of wood, iron, cast iron, terra cotta, tile, and brick.

Not Recommended

Stripping porches and steps or original material and architectural features, such as hand rails, balusters, columns, brackets, and roof decoration of wood, iron, cast iron, terra cotta, tile and brick.

Enclosing porches and steps in a manner that destroys their intended appearance.

Exterior FinishesRecommended

Discovering the historic paint colors and finishes of the structure and repainting with those colors to illustrate the distinctive character of the property.

Not Recommended

Removing paint and finishes down to the bare surface; strong paint strippers whether chemical or mechanical can permanently damage the surface. Also, stripping obliterates evidence the historical paint finishes.

Repainting with colors that cannot be documented through research and investigation to be appropriate to the building and neighborhood.

## BUILDING: INTERIOR FEATURES

Recommended

Retaining original material, architectural features, and hardware, whenever possible, such as stairs, elevators, hand rails, balusters, ornamental columns, cornices, baseboards, doors, doorways, windows, mantel pieces, paneling, lighting fixtures, parquet or mosaic flooring.

Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.

Not Recommended

Removing original material, architectural features, and hardware, except where essential for safety or efficiency.

Replacing interior doors and transoms without investigating alternative fire protection measures or possible code variances.

Installing new decorative material and paneling which destroys significant architectural features or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as vinyl plastic or imitation wood wall and floor coverings, except in utility areas such as bathrooms and kitchens.





## BUILDING: INTERIOR FEATURES—continued

Recommended

Retaining original plaster, whenever possible.

Discovering and retaining original paint colors, wallpapers and other decorative motifs or, where necessary, replacing them with colors, wallpapers or decorative motifs based on the original.

Where required by code, enclosing an important interior stairway in such a way as to retain its character. In many cases glazed fire rated walls may be used.

Retaining the basic plan of a building, the relationship and size of rooms, corridors, and other spaces.

Not Recommended

Removing plaster to expose brick to give the wall an appearance it never had.

Changing the texture and patina of exposed wooden architectural features (including structural members) and masonry surfaces through sandblasting or use of other abrasive techniques to remove paint, discoloration and plaster, except in certain industrial or warehouse buildings where the interior masonry or plaster surfaces do not have significant design, detailing, tooling, or finish; and where wooden architectural features are not finished, molded, beaded, or worked by hand.

Enclosing important stairways with ordinary fire rated construction which destroys the architectural character of the stair and the space.

Altering the basic plan of a building by demolishing principal walls, partitions, and stairways.

## NEW CONSTRUCTION

Recommended

Keeping new additions and adjacent new construction to a minimum, making them compatible in scale, building materials, and texture.

Designing new work to be compatible in materials, size, color, and texture with the earlier building and the neighborhood.

Not Recommended

Designing new work which is incompatible with the earlier building and the neighborhood in materials, size, scale, and texture.



## NEW CONSTRUCTION—continued

Recommended

Using contemporary designs compatible with the character and mood of the building or the neighborhood.

Protecting architectural details and features that contribute to the character of the building.

Placing television antennae and mechanical equipment, such as air conditioners, in an inconspicuous location.

Not Recommended

Imitating an earlier style or period of architecture in new additions, except in rare cases where a contemporary design would detract from the architectural unity of an ensemble or group. Especially avoid imitating an earlier style of architecture in new additions that have a completely contemporary function such as a drive-in bank or garage.

Adding new height to the building that changes the scale and character of the building. Additions in height should not be visible when viewing the principal facades.

Adding new floors or removing existing floors that destroy important architectural details, features and spaces of the building.

Placing television antennae and mechanical equipment, such as air conditioners, where they can be seen from the street.

MECHANICAL SYSTEMS: HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING,  
FIRE PROTECTION

Recommended

Installing necessary mechanical systems in areas and spaces that will require the least possible alteration to the structural integrity and physical appearance of the building.

Utilizing early mechanical systems, including plumbing and early lighting fixtures, where possible.

Not Recommended

Causing unnecessary damage to the plan, materials, and appearance of the building when installing mechanical systems.

Attaching exterior electrical and telephone cables to the principal elevations of the building.





MECHANICAL SYSTEMS: HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING,  
FIRE PROTECTION—continued

Recommended

Installing the vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables in closets, service rooms, and wall cavities.

Insuring adequate ventilation of attics, crawlspaces, and cellars to prevent moisture problems.

Installing thermal insulation in attics and in unheated cellars and crawlspaces to conserve energy.

Not Recommended

Installing vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables in places where they will be a visual intrusion.

Concealing or "making invisible" mechanical equipment in historic walls or ceilings. Frequently this concealment requires the removal of historic fabric.

Installing "dropped" acoustical ceilings to hide mechanical equipment. This destroys the proportions and character of the rooms.

Installing foam, glass fiber, or cellulose insulation into wall cavities of either wooden or masonry construction. This has been found to cause moisture problems when there is no adequate moisture barrier.

SAFETY AND CODE REQUIREMENTS

Recommended

Complying with code requirements in such a manner that the essential character of a building is preserved intact.

Working with local code officials to investigate alternative life safety measures that preserve the architectural integrity of the building.

Investigating variances for historic properties allowed under some local codes.

Not Recommended



## SAFETY AND CODE REQUIREMENTS--continued

Recommended

Installing adequate fire prevention equipment in a manner that does minimal damage to the appearance or fabric of a property.

Adding new stairways and elevators that do not alter existing exit facilities or other important architectural features and spaces of the building.

Not Recommended

Adding new stairways and elevators that alter existing exit facilities or important architectural features and spaces of the building.

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National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

January 1980 (rev.)





## BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION - STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### Introductory Statement on Standards and Criteria to be Used in Evaluating Applications for Certificates

Per Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of the Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation. The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.

It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, not all of which are under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- a) Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- b) Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- c) Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (with three different categories for buildings, building interiors and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standard and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.



9.2 General Standards and Criteria

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. The use of imitation replacement materials is generally discouraged.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. Contemporary design is encouraged for new additions; thus, they must not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I. MASONRY

1. Retain whenever possible, original masonry and mortar.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellent coating to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

II NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.





#### C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers, brackets.

#### D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

#### E. PORCHES, STEPS AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

#### F. SIGNS, MARQUEES AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees and awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purposes different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.



## G PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse will be approved.
2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
  - a) Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; set-backs shall be utilized.
  - b) Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
  - c) Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
  - d) Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

## H LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.
3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

## I EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are three aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building:
  - a) Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b) Quality of illumination on building exterior.
  - c) Interior lighting as seen from the exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.





## General Standards and Criteria

3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a) Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b) Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
  - c) New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
5. Interior lighting shall only be reviewed when its character has a significant effect on the exterior of the building; that is, when the view of the illuminated fixtures themselves, or the quality and color of the light they produce, is clearly visible through the exterior fenestration.

## J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
2. Factors that will be considered include:
  - a) Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b) Historic association with the property.
  - c) Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
  - d) Functional usefulness.



# BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

## DESIGNATION OF U. S. CUSTOM HOUSE

### Section 9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA (DRAFT)

The intention of these standards is to preserve the architectural integrity and appearance of the building, both the original structure and in the added tower, which has been carefully maintained throughout its history. The general approach is to allow minimal change to those elements which are essential to the architectural integrity of the building and to encourage such changes to other elements, or to control them in a manner that enhances the appearance of the building.

#### 1. BUILDING MASS

No additions shall be permitted to the existing massing of the building.

#### 2. EXTERIOR WALLS AND ROOF

No new opening shall be allowed within the granite walls.

Original basement openings which have been closed-in may be reopened, and service access to the building shall be located within the basement-level openings on McKinley Square.

No duct work or exposed conduit may be installed on the exterior walls.

Roof tiles shall be repaired and any necessary replacements shall match the existing tiles.

Original masonry and mortar shall be retained whenever possible.

Original mortar shall be duplicated in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.

Deteriorated masonry shall be repaired and replaced with material which matches as closely as possible.

When necessary to clean masonry, the gentlest method possible shall be used. Sandblasting is prohibited. Test patches should always be conducted and examined through a full set of seasons prior to cleaning.

Waterproofing or water repellent coating shall not be applied to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem, since such coatings can accelerate deterioration.

In general, masonry surfaces should not be painted. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

#### 3. TOWER

Alterations to the existing enclosure on the observation deck should attempt to minimize the visibility of the metal screening with appropriate paint treatment or with non-reflective metal.

Dish antennas and similar communication devices are not permitted.

Restoration of the original revolving beacon is encouraged, and should be incorporated into the stainless steel cap.

The pressed copper spandrels and grillework may be cleaned using acceptable techniques for preservation of exterior copper.

The illuminated clock faces and hands are a significant visual feature on the city skyline and shall be maintained in working order.

The copper cresting above the clock face level shall be retained, and when replacement is necessary, identical material and design shall be used.





Fixtures installed for uplighting of the tower should be mounted inconspicuously; the introduction of a multi-colored scheme is not encouraged.

#### 4. WINDOWS

Copper-clad six-over-six light windows exist under the porticos facing India St. and McKinley Square. These original windows shall be retained and repaired. Since the original windows were metal-clad, metal replacement windows for other window openings are acceptable, provided they have through muntins and duplicate as closely as possible the configuration, profile, and recess, and color of the original copper-clad windows. Particular attention should be directed to recreating the framing sections and matching the finish in color. No tinted or reflective-coated glass shall be allowed.

Replacement of the metal factory sash (dating to 1950) in the 1837 portion of the building is encouraged. Replacement windows may be metal-framed to resemble the existing six pane-over-six pane sash facing India Street, or wood-constructed with a through-muntin assembly, with paint color to match either the condition on the upper elevations or the original.

Existing basement level windows date from the 1916 alterations to the building and should be retained.

Removal of the mesh grilles over the basement windows is encouraged. Should the scuttles below the basement windows be proposed for removal, one shall be maintained as evidence of their original function.

New window grilles should be substantial in appearance and relate to a classical motif present elsewhere on the building, such as the Roman grating.

No balconies shall be allowed.

Removal of protruding window unit air conditioners is encouraged.

All proposals for HVAC equipment shall be reviewed by the Commission, and such equipment shall be concealed within the integral architectural features of the building.

#### 5. ENTRANCES

The elaborate doors within the porticos at the McKinley Sq. and India St. entrances should be cleaned and preserved. The contemporary oak doors at the flanking street-level entrances and the airlocks may be replaced.

The design and materials of replacement doors should relate to classically-inspired detailing elsewhere within the building.

An appropriate handicap access through the street-level entrance facing Central St. is recommended.

Exterior lighting fixtures should be mounted within the opening of each entryway. The existing contemporary fixtures here are inappropriate, and should be replaced.

Replacement of the stair railings on India St. is encouraged, provided that their replacements are compatible with the architectural character and dignity of the building.



6. SIGNS

Wall plaques should be mounted into mortar joints and not into the masonry, which has remarkably few boring scars from signs. The use of interior window signs, free-standing kiosks, and banners is preferred to wall-mounted signs.

Protruding signs are not allowed. No back-lit signs shall be allowed. Awnings over window openings are not allowed. Canopies may be installed over street-level entryways.

7. MISCELLANEOUS EXTERIOR FEATURES.

Anti-pigeon devices shall be subject to the review of the Commission. Copper roof flashing shall be retained and repaired wherever possible.

8. INTERIOR.

The designation applies to the street-level lobby and to the full rotunda space on the upper floors within the original 1837 building.

The ceiling vaulting of the street level lobby shall be maintained.

The volume of the rotunda space shall not be interrupted, and all service elements should be located within the street-level space. The design of such installations should reinforce the style of the building or be of a restrained contemporary design.

No original material surface covering shall be removed. The marble flooring tiles shall be preserved and not covered permanently. The granite or marble surfaces shall not be painted.

Cleaning of the marble is not encouraged. If necessary, it should occur with professional supervision and only after careful evaluation of a sample test patch.

The installation of replacement lighting fixtures of a more traditional design is encouraged. No exposed conduit shall be allowed. Suspended fixtures and wall sconces are preferable to ceiling-mounted fixtures.

Relocation of the exposed sprinkler system is recommended.

Restoration of the decorative cast metal elevator door surrounds is recommended.

Replacement of the contemporary flush metal elevator doors is recommended.

The decorative iron stair rails (now painted) on the upper levels of the rotunda should be restored to their original finish based on professional conservation practices.

Interior illumination of the dome should be achieved with inconspicuous fixtures.

Signs should be respectful of the design elements within the rotunda; contemporary typeface and plastic signs are discouraged.





*3. Custom House District*



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:

Massachusetts

COUNTY:

Suffolk

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

Custom House District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

## 2. LOCATION 9th Congressional District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Suffolk

CODE

025

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

(Check One)

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

ACCESSIBLE  
TO THE PUBLIC

- ☒ District ☐ Building  
☐ Site ☐ Structure  
☐ Object

- ☐ Public  
☐ Private  
☒ Both

- Public Acquisition:  
☐ In Process  
☐ Being Considered

- ☒ Occupied  
☒ Unoccupied  
☒ Preservation work  
in progress

- Yes:  
☒ Restricted  
☒ Unrestricted  
☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Agricultural ☒ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments  
☒ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☒ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

public and private

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

Suffolk County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic American Building Survey Mass. -125, -789

DATE OF SURVEY: 1935

☒ Federal☐ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE:

D.C.

CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS	STATE:	Massachusetts
	COUNTY:	Suffolk
	ENTRY NUMBER	
	DATE	





## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Custom House District of 15.9 acres includes the property within a line beginning at #1 Faneuil Hall Square turning south on Merchants Row for one block, turning east on Chatham Street, turning south on Commercial Street, turning east on State Street, turning south at the central artery of the John F. Fitzgerald Expressway continuing along the artery to High Street, continuing west on High Street to northwest on Batterymarch, turning east on Kilby Place, turning north at the back lot line of #30 Kilby Street, turning west on Bangs Alley, turning north at the back lot line of #15 Broad Street, and west of #99 State Street, turning west on State Street and north to the side lot line of #74 State Street, including the back lot line of #10 Merchants Row and #1 Faneuil Hall Square.

The Custom House District is an exhibit of mixed commercial architecture reflecting Boston's development as a major mercantile city. Originally, State and its extension, Long Wharf, plus Kilby and Batterymarch St. were the streets which converged with the early wharves and their scattering of small buildings. State Street, existing since Boston's founding, was extended to Long Wharf in 1710. This street and active pier formed the main link from the waterfront to Washington Street, the central axis to the neck. Chatham Street was laid in 1825 as part of the Quincy Market development to improve market facilities at Faneuil Hall. The resulting six new streets lined with stores and warehouses held the over flow of goods from Merchant's Row (laid in 1708).

In 1805 the Broad Street Association led by Uriah Cotting, with Charles Bulfinch as planner, began a development which altered the colonial waterfront both north and south of Long Wharf. By a land fill operation south of Long Wharf, they organized a street pattern dominated by two wide streets, Broad and India, which generally followed the contours of the harbor and were crossed by smaller access streets. Combined with the contiguous areas of the Markets and Faneuil Hall and the financial center on State Street, this expanded district became the center of Boston's merchant energies through the early years of the 19th century.

## MAJOR STRUCTURES

The oldest buildings (c. 1810) in this district are #5, 7, 63-73, 64-70, 72, 102 Broad Street and #175 Milk Street(1). These Federal style buildings are the remnants of those erected from the design of Bulfinch for the Broad Street Association. Each building is of brick and was originally 4 stories in height with flared lintels, the 4th story windows being characteristically smaller and square. The cornice was a simple brick imitation of dentils and a string course of stone separated the stories. Originally the street level consisted of a central doorway flanked by two windows. Hipped roofs topped the edifices. Although significant alterations to window openings, ground floors, and roof lines have occurred, the Federal style and scale is still clearly preserved.

Central Wharf(2) at 146-176 Milk Street (1819) consisted of a row of 54 brick stores down the center of a wharf and formed the continuation of Milk Street. Surviving today are only eight of the original fifty-four units. Like the other Federal-style buildings in this district, each unit consisted of 4 stories, three bays with two six over six pane sashes flanking a central doorway at street level and capped by a hipped roof.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



## 3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☒ 18th Century

☐ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☐ 17th Century

☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Historic

☐ Agriculture

☒ Architecture

☐ Art

☒ Commerce

☐ Communications

☐ Conservation

☐ Education

☐ Engineering

☐ Industry

☐ Invention

☐ Landscape

☐ Architecture

☐ Literature

☐ Military

☐ Music

☐ Political

☐ Religion/Phi-

losophy

☐ Science

☐ Sculpture

☐ Social/Human-

itarian

☐ Theater

☐ Transportation

☒ Urban Planning

☐ Other (Specify)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Custom House district is significant as an example of foresighted urban planning, by the Broad Street Associates, which allowed for the evolution of a district of commercial architecture reflective of a continually growing and prosperous mercantile Boston.

The Federal style buildings on Broad and Milk Streets are the sole surviving examples of the planned effort by Charles Bulfinch to create order for waterfront commerce. Building requirements were specified and adhered to for the sake of unity and the cohesive pattern of this development can still be observed. The small scale, mass, and fenestration of the Federal style is particularly noteworthy in this district where later more monumental styles are interwoven.

Central Wharf built by 1819 is the only remaining brick structure that exemplifies the architecture of Boston's early eighteenth century wharves. Similar to Bulfinch's India Wharf (demolished by 1968) and the other Federal-style buildings in this district, Central Wharf is easily distinguished in McKinley Square - beside the monumental granite edifices in view.

Built by Ammi B. Young between 1834-47 the Custom House on the corner of India and State Streets was originally at the water's edge, an ideal location for its use. With inspiration from classical Greece, the revival style was found to be an appropriate architectural form to express the confidence and dignity of an emerging Boston. As a Federally-owned building, it was not bound by the city's 125' height restriction, and, thus, when the tower was added, between 1913 and 1915, it became the first skyscraper in Boston.

The Grain and Flour Exchange, designed by Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge in 1890-92, commands the area of McKinley Square. Its rounded massing provides a striking contrast in scale, form and character to the other brick and granite buildings. This structure is one of the fine examples of Romanesque Revival architecture in the city of Boston.

Granite structures were the pride of mid-nineteenth century Boston. The new technology for transporting large blocks of granite catalyzed the change in scale of commercial buildings. Small brick warehouses and wharf buildings gave way to monumental blocks of granite. Economy of detail in these buildings places greater emphasis on the massive form. Granite warehouses were built in great numbers from the 1820's to 1860's, but only a few survive to reflect the power and prosperity of this mercantile port.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Suffolk	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

6. Boston Landmarks Commission Survey  
1972 Local  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City Hall  
Boston, Massachusetts 025

7. Continued

Presently, ground floor alterations and additional floors on several units exist, yet the original window pattern, brick, and general scale are still retained.

The Custom House(3) at McKinley Square is a prime example of the Greek Revival style. Basically a version of a Doric temple, the longitudinal axis is crossed by a truncated axis with the crossing originally covered by a saucer dome. A giant Doric colonnade surrounds the two story granite structure which is set on a high basement. Under the pedimented gable ends, entrance is reached by a flight of steps. The reposed templar design was altered earlier in this century when its dome was removed, and a 16 story office tower was constructed.

Opposite the Custom House is the Flour and Grain Exchange(4), 177 Milk Street, illustrating the medievalizing trend in later Victorian architecture. Its blunt rounded granite facade and steep conical roof give the structure a picturesque silhouette as well as indicating its massive volume. The fenestration is arranged under connecting three story arches to emphasize the trading floor. String courses at each floor level provide a horizontal emphasis contrasting the vertical thrust of the windows which is continued in the peaked dormer windows, which creates a coronet around the roof cone.

The State Street Block(5), 177-199 State Street, designed by Gridley J. F. Bryant (1858) is a massive structure of dark rough-hewn granite. Granite ornamentation is severe and limited to the keystones of the segmental-arched windows, plain string courses, and the heavy bracketed cornice. On the McKinley Square facade, the cornice breaks into an arched pediment under which a decorative globe of the world is mounted. Although the Block was truncated by demolition of the majority of its bays and some roof and ground floor alterations have occurred, the monumental character of the building is preserved.

The mixed commercial fabric of this district is further enhanced by several structures illustrating later Victorian architectural style.

Two rough-hewn granite-faced buildings remain at #50 (c. 1860) and 109 Broad Street (1870)(6). Both display mansard roofs and string courses between stories. #50 Broad Street has a more consciously decorative use of granite in the corbelled cornice, bracketed lintels, and on the ground floor, arched keystone window frames. #109 Broad Street has segmental arched windows still intact on the upper floors, but ground floor alterations obscure the original openings.

#99 Broad Street (1854) and the Pond Building (1854)(7) at #1 Faneuil Hall Square are noteworthy examples of slab-granite construction. The huge flat surfaced blocks are interrupted only by the tripartite window and door openings.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Suffolk	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. Continued

The Chadwick Lead Works 176-184 High Street(8). Designed by William G. Preston in 1887 with a functional lead drop tower, it is a leading example of commercial architecture in Boston after the fire of 1872. It is a brick structure with brownstone and terra cotta ornamentation, and large round headed arches containing pairs of windows.

The Harvard Club, 22 Batterymarch(9). This handsome French Renaissance Revival edifice was designed by Ball and Dabney in 1893. It is a brick building with a stone ground floor decorated with keyed voussoir arches and paired windows above outlined by a narrow stone molding.

114 State Street(10). This cast-iron commercial building, circa 1860, with arcaded fenestration is the only one of its kind in the district. The ground floor has been altered radically.

8. Continued

The Custom House district is an architectural environment of great heterogeneity in form, scale, materials, and styles. Constructed through a century, the changing techniques and attitudes of development are reflected in the variety of plot sizes and building scales. Yet, the transitions between the juxtaposed forms are successful. The broad base and height of the twentieth century Batterymarch Building does not disturb the solidity of the granite warehouses. The fanciful treatment of the many Italianate structures balances the reserve of the small Federal style brick buildings. A combination of textures and colors can be found in a single building such as those facing Water Street at Liberty Square, or in a complete street scape such as Merchants Row. This variety when set upon an irregular street pattern creates many strong spaces of surprising contrast and a system of well defined vistas. This district of commercial architecture, which honors mercantile Boston, a delicately balanced yet successful mixture.

9. Continued

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Whitehill, Walter Muir. Boston: A Topographical History. Rev. ed., Cambridge, 1968.

Winsor, Juston, ed. Memorial History of Boston. 4 vols. Boston 1881-1886.





# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bacon, (Edwin M.), Bacon's Dictionary of Boston. Boston, 1886

Boston Street Commissioners. Record of Streets, Alleys, Places, etc., in the City of Boston. 2nd ed. Boston, 1910.

Herndon, Richard. Boston of To-Day. Boston, 1892.

Shurtleff, Nathaniel Bradstreet. A Topographical and Historical Description of Boston. Boston, 1870.

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	42° 21' 34.79"	71° 03' 23.93"				
NE	42° 21' 34.79"	71° 03' 07.87"				
SE	42° 21' 23.07"	71° 03' 07.87"				
SW	42° 21' 23.07"	71° 03' 23.93"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 15.9

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Carol Todreas, Deborah Gott-lin		
ORGANIZATION Boston Landmarks Commission	DATE February 1973	
STREET AND NUMBER: City Hall		
CITY OR TOWN: Boston	STATE Massachusetts	CODE 025

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



*4. Maps*



BULL HALL  
SQUARE

CUSTOM HOUSE DISTRICT

1. Broad St. Associates buildings
2. Central Wharf
3. Custom House
4. Flour and Grange buildings
5. State Street Block
6. 50-54 Broad
7. 109-133 Broad
8. Pond Building
9. 99-101 Broad

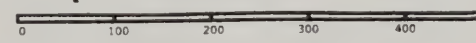
SCALE: 1:100



CUSTOM HOUSE DISTRICT







Property

DATE JULY 7, 1964

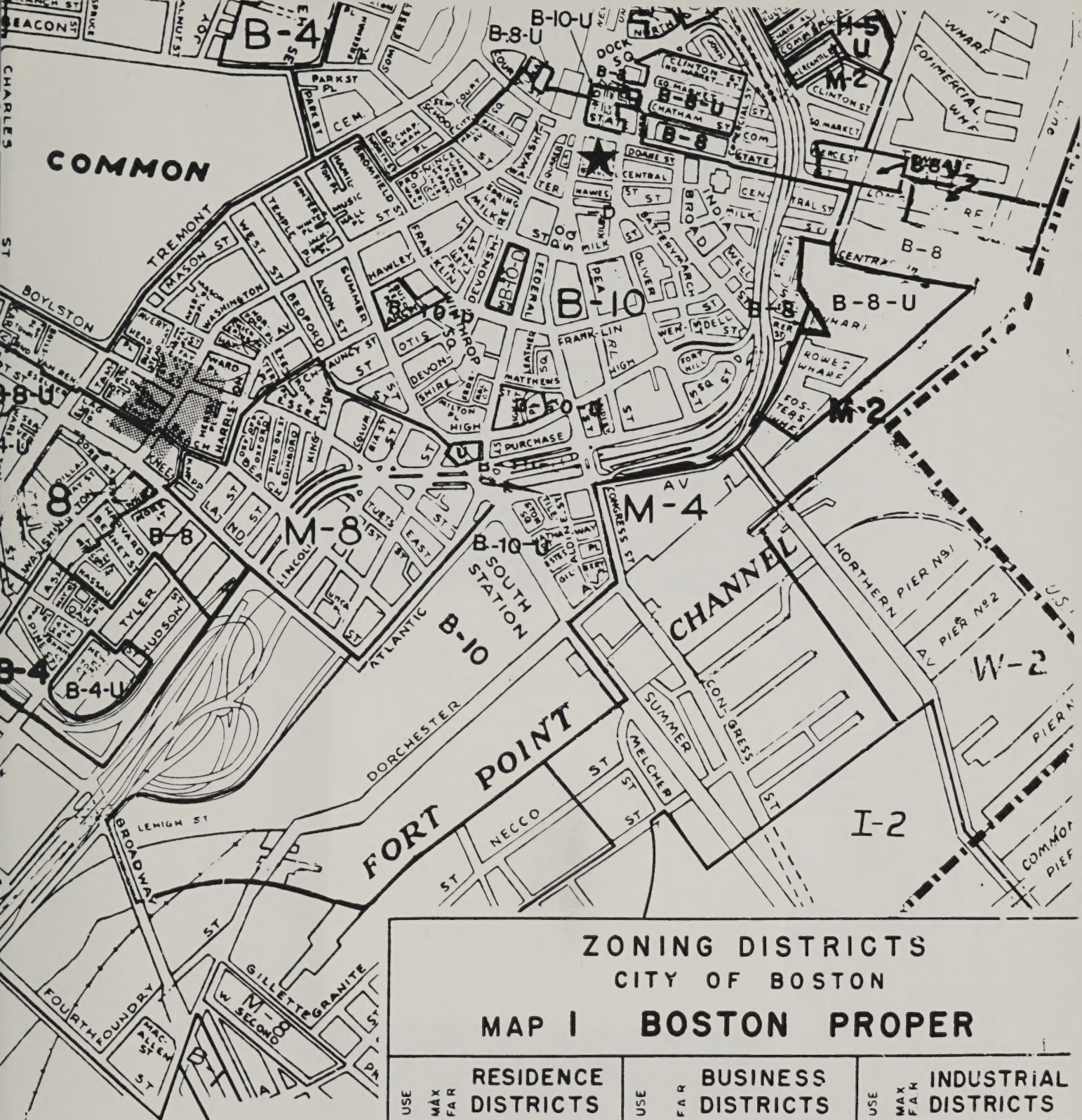
EXHIBIT A

**Downtown Waterfront —  
Faneuil Hall  
Urban Renewal Area  
Massachusetts R-77**

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY







# ZONING DISTRICTS CITY OF BOSTON

## MAP I BOSTON PROPER

RESIDENCE DISTRICTS		BUSINESS DISTRICTS		INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS	
USE	MAX FAR	USE	MAX FAR	USE	MAX FAR
S-3	5	L-5	8	M-1	4
R-5	8	1	2	2	8
H-1	2	1	2	I-2	GENERAL MANUFACTURING
		2	3		
		3	8	W-2	WATERFRONT INDUSTRY
		4	10		
		5			

Date of Map August 15, 1962

adopted by the  
ZONING COMMISSION

of the  
CITY OF BOSTON

In meeting on *Aug 15 1962*

*Arthur J. Quinn* CHAIRMAN

ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARY

RESTRICTED PARKING

DISTRICT BOUNDARY

(E) DISTRICT

ADULT ENTERTAINMENT OVERLAY

PREPARED BY THE BOSTON ZONING COMMISSION

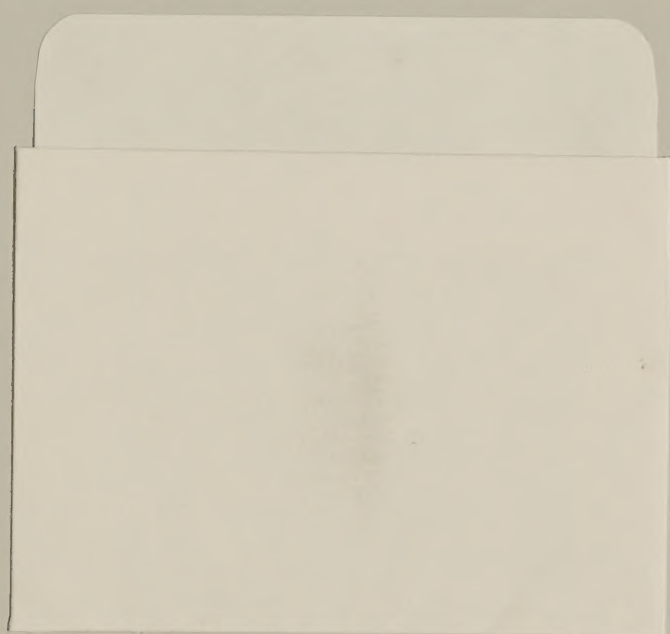
Scale in Feet

1000 500 0 500 1000









**BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY**

